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A collection of writings by students in literacy, General Educational Development (GED), and pre-GED programs includes 48 personal narratives, biographical reports, stories, opinions, and poems, including two in Spanish with English translations. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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Focus

a Look at New Writers

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Focus: A Look at New Writers

Focus: A Look at New Writers is a publication of Discipleship Outreach Ministries. This collection of writings is a product of our Literacy, ESL and Pre-GED Programs.

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Foreword

Education is personal. It is a personal need; it is a personal struggle, and it is a personal success. Education is uniquely yours. No one can simply give it to you. You have to earn it. Once you have it, no one can ever take it away from you. Only you can make it productive.

This book is a monument to men and women who have made education a priority in their lives and who are in the active struggle of educating themselves. They want to share their personal success with you.

Rev. Doug Heilman
Founder of Discipleship

Personals

The Key

The key to knowledge to me is to learn how to read and write. For the key will unlock many doors. Yet I'm not a locksmith, but I'm looking for the key. I'm like a person "looking for a needle in a haystack."

A man once said, "The world is a stage, and everyone must play a part." Here I am playing the part of a searcher in search of knowledge just like Romeo searched for Juliet just like Casanova searches for love.

Many people ask me what is my goal. I will answer like this. Just like a baby must take a first step to try to learn how to walk, just like a child so do I take the first step. I think the first step in a person's life is to know what the problem is and to do something about it.

So I say to you, writing and reading is my dream. This is my goal, and this is my quest. I unfold my thoughts to you. Andrew Worhol said that every person should have his 15 minutes in the spotlight. I would like for my 15 minutes to be spent on stage reading to an audience. So as I read I want my words to echo from the walls.

Angel Torres

Deprived of My Childhood Education

My name is Dassie Richards. I was born in Jamaica in the Parish of Trelawny. I lived there with my mother until I was ten years old. I was not sent to school because my mother was very poor and could not afford to send me to school.

My mother left me when I was ten years old with people I did not know. I was very unhappy. One day my grandmother came to visit me; and she took me to St. Mary, the parish where she was living. She did not send me to school because she thought that I was too old to go to school to start learning how to read and write.

I have four brothers and three sisters and none of us went to school when we were young. My mother had to work on a plantation to take care of seven children. I am the second child for my mother. When I was sixteen years old I had to work on the plantation to buy clothes and food for myself. I earned four shillings per day. I use to dance alot and won prizes because I was a good dancer. I use to do the twist.

I am very happy to know that I can now go to school and learn something so that I will be able to read, write and feel good about myself.

Maria Rosario

Reading to the Kids

I did the book by myself. Then I tried to read. I got some of the sentences right. Words I didn't know I remembered to sound out. When I sounded them out, I made sure I had them right. I went to my sister next door.

My kids felt happy. My daughter wanted me to teach her how to read. I felt happy because it was the first time I ever read a book for myself and the kids.

Opening the Eyes of the Blind

I can remember two vision problems I had before I knew God and His healing power. One was physical and one spiritual. I was born with an inturned eye. The doctors suspected the problem was Amblypoia which means one eye is stronger than the other. Eventually a child will begin to lose vision in the weaker eye. The result may be blindness. At the age of two, I had an operation in order to correct the problem, but the operation failed and left me with sight only in my left eye. The doctors said there was no hope for my right eye.

The spiritual blindness I had was not knowing God as my personal Savior and the love He could give me. As a child I would search in order to find the love I longed for, looking in all the wrong places. As I got older my physical blindness became worse. I wasn't able to see regular print and even giant print was a struggle. Most often I depended on my hearing in order to cross streets. I remember a few times comimg close to getting hit by a car because the glare of the headlights made it hard to see distance of cars.

In 1987 God opened my spiritual eyes to Him. I verbally said I wanted Him to enter my life and change it, not realizing for Him to do so I had to be willing to change. I wanted to get off drugs and turn my life around because I knew I was heading into a dead-end street with no control. Yet I wasn't willing to give up the life I was leading.

As time went on, I had Christian friends encouraging me to enter a Christian rehabilatation program called Teen Challenge Inc. January of 1988 I decided to enter feeling I had nothing left to lose. I went in not only to stop drugs but to give God a chance and see if He could fix up the mess I was in. It wasn't until then that I decided to live fully in His ways. That's when God started doing work in my life -- when I let go and let God. As time went on I started learning to put my trust in Him for everything even my eyesight. At times doubt would enter because of the doctors and my impaired vision, I wondered if there was really any hope.

In December of 1988 (two weeks before Christmas), God gave me a dream of the healing He would do if I kept my trust in Him and not men. My first response was doubt, " How could God heal me when the doctors don't even know the problem?" I tried to believe and stand on my faith anyway. Then things started to happen. I saw a " Don't Walk " sign from across the street and stood amazed. Another time I saw the glare of a street light turning from green to red but was unable to distinguish the colors yet.

Finally on January 3rd on my way to school, I was praying and as I got on the train I saw colors I never saw before. Signs that were once blurred were finally clear. I went from train to train looking at a whole new life with a whole new view of things. It kind of reminds me of the time I recieved Christ in my life. Before I made that commitment Iwas living in a dark and empty world with a locked door and no way out. After making that commitment to Christ, He opened the door of darkness so that I could see the light and the truth of what life is really meant for. I realize it was made for serving God and praising Him for the beautiful things He made around us.

It was lovely to see colors I never saw before. I saw different shades of blue, gray, and even a light color such as yellow. It was learning colors for the first time. It was really somthing to look one block down and still be able to see signs as if they were right in front of you. That day I dragged my spiritual mother (a person who helps and guides you in your walk with God) out of her house so she could see me read a sign one block down. That day I asked her to teach me all the colors I'd missed.

I'll never forget the first time I saw a star, the blue sky or an orange sunset. I broke night just to see the night turn to day. Just to see stars disappear into the night. God opened my spiritual eyes to know Him more dearly and my physical eyes to see the things He made more clearly.

Maribel Cynthia Claudio

Nick Demetro

Try and Try Again

My girlfriend is why I want to learn how to read and write because I want a driver's license so I can get a car to drive my girlfriend to school so she never takes the train again. She is very pretty in more ways than one, and I care for her very much. I want to make her very proud of me because I want to marry her. I know I will learn how to read and write, but it takes time. I will try my best to make things turn out for the best. Until then I will try and try again.

My Testimony

My name is Reuben. The name Reuben comes from the Bible. Reuben was one of the twelve sons of Jacob. I was saved (became a born-again Christian) on New Year's Day in 1989. People had been ministering the Bible to me before that time, but I wasn't ready to accept it yet.

My Christian sister needed me to help set up a room for a Christmas play. I agreed to go and help the pastor. While we were working, the pastor shared the Gospel with me. I began to open up to the pastor at this point. I was unsure of what to do so I asked him to pray with me. I wanted to check out the church on Sunday to see if I would like it.

I liked the church very much. When I went there I I felt the presence of God, but I didn't want anyone to push me into it. I wanted to make the commitment on my own. When the pastor made an altar call, I went forward and asked Jesus into my life.

Before I was a Christian I used to be into black magic and voodoo. I believe that a curse was passed down from generation to generation. I believed the curse was passed down to me because I was the only one to practice black magic. When I felt the power of God then I realized that there was no power stronger than God's power.

When I was twenty seven years old I shot a guy, and I was tried in the Supreme Court. I was found guilty of first degree murder. I was sentenced to be hung in twenty one days. Three days before my time was up, I started to pray to God. I prayed for three nights and three days asking God to release me from being hung. I made a promise to God that if He got me out of this hanging, I would serve him for the rest of my life. One night before the hanging, they granted me an appeal, and they tried the case again and gave me seven years.

When I got the seven years I didn't remember what God had done for me. I turned my back on Him. It wasn't until I came to America that God touched me and reminded me of the promise that I made. If God can change me, I know that He can change others like me. May God bless the readers or hearers of this my testimony.

Reuben

My Boyfriend

My boyfriend's name is Freddy. We are about the same age. He's seventeen, and I'm sixteen. I love him. He is always there for me, very understanding, but also very jealous.

I met him in Franklin DeLano Roosevelt High School. He was in my English class. He sat next to me, but we didn't really talk. When he finally did, I was in shock.

The next day I was walking with my best friend, Rosa. We saw him and his friends. They were playing handball, so I began to play with them. It was getting dark; we just ended up hanging out.

We went to the movies. I really got to know him and began to like him. He's a good boyfriend. He takes me places, buys me things and is good to me.

He's not like other guys who are selfish and like to beat their girlfriends. We have a good relationship; but when we argue, it's like a war. We're both hard-headed and stubborn. We allow each other time apart, for example, he is able to hang out with his friends, and I can go to the beach and wear my bikini.

My boyfriend and I have a lot of fun. One time when I was drinking soda, I spit it at him. He asked me, "Did you ever get soda thrown in your face?" I said, "No". So he threw it at me. I asked him, "Did you ever get hit with chocolate in your face?" He didn't answer. I threw the chocolate in his face; you should have seen it! It was funny!

We have lots of fun together whether we go to the movies, play handball, or have a food fight. We enjoy being together! I hope it lasts a long time.

14 **Michelle Lewis**

My Vacation to Florida

The summer was already here, and my parents decided to go to Florida to combine a pleasure trip to Disney World, and business. My father wanted to buy land in Florida.

My father found out that Florida is a peaceful place to retire, and a clean, economical place to live. In my opinion Florida is more peaceful than I would like.

At first I did't want to go because I thought it would be a boring trip especially with my parents. Another reason is that I would miss my girlfriend, Michelle. I decided to go anyway because I never went anywhere with my parents, and I wanted to make them happy.

Before we left for Florida, I thought that I would regret going because it was going to be a long trip. After I got there I was surprised! I had a good time. I went to different places like Disney World and Church Street Station in Orlando. This was the best part of the trip. My close friend, Ario who lives in Florida took me to these places and showed me a good time. Even though I was having a wonderful time, I kept thinking of Michelle because I missed her.

The people out there are friendly and are concerned about keeping where they live clean. What I mean is that they show respect for what's theirs and also respect for others. Orlando has a clean environment and is a respectable place.

My summer vacation was not a loss after all. I had a good time even though I was mostly with my parents. I came to think that going out with my parents is not a bad thing after all. Even though Michelle was a great distance from me, I always knew that she'd be waiting for me when I returned.

Freddy Lebron

Ray Villanova

About Him

God is like a strong rock, and He can save you or me. He doesn't like when you lie. God will protect everyone. God is real and loveable. He will help you with your problems. I feel so good about Him.

He is an important teacher, and God did not send His Son into the world to judge the world guilty. God is the light, and He will show that the things He has done were done through God.

God does not see the people by the outside; God sees people by the inside because He can find the person by the heart. God is a very smart person. And I believe in Him. My life changed because I saw the light, and things are better in life now!

Bertha Torres

My Love for Animals

I love animals. Not all animals, but I do like cats, dogs, hamsters, birds, monkeys, seals, ferrets and ground hogs. In other words, I like cute, furry animals. What I don't like are snakes, spiders, roaches, worms, bats or anything slimy with a lot of legs.

Some people are very cruel. They throw out innocent cats and dogs in the street. I hate to see them digging in trash cans and garbage for food and looking for a place to keep warm especially in the winter. It just breaks my heart.

I try to help some of them by feeding them, bathing them and finding nice homes for them. Sometimes I wish that I could keep all of the strays, but I can't keep any of them. My mother won't allow it since I already have a cat, a dog, a hamster and a set of parakeets (the cat and dog were once strays). Most of the time I get too attached to the animal.

When the time comes to give them away, it's very difficult. I always give the strays names before giving them away. Their names usually match their appearance, characteristics or habits. For example, once I found a little black dog who I named Ninja. Another time I found a fat calico cat, who I named Spice. The colors on her coat reminded me of spices such as nutmeg and cinnamon.

I wish that there were more people who think and care about animals as I do. That way I wouldn't be alone in the crusade to save the homeless animals. If by a miracle, I won the lottery I would give 50% to the homeless animals.

Nellie Velazquez

Love at First Sight

My father's name was Jose Juaquin Velazquez. He was born in a small town in Camuy, Puerto Rico in the year of 1927. His birthday was May 21, 1927. He was the youngest of three children. His oldest brother's name was Nolasco Velazquez who died at age 98, not too long ago. Then there was his sister, Ana Velazquez, who died of tuberculosis in her mid-thirties. Then my father died 25 years ago on April 20, 1962.

My mother's name is Nelida Candelaria. She was born in a near by town of Camuy called Hatillo also in Puerto Rico. She was born on April 25, 1929. She is now 59 years of age and presently living in Arecibl, Puerto Rico. My mother remarried after my youngest brother was 18 years of age, and I was 19 years old.

My father's parents died in the year of 1932 leaving my aunt and father too young to do for themselves. I know that my father was adopted by a very well-educated family who loved him and took good care of him when he was five years old. These people, the Soto family, were and still are living in the house where my father was brought up. The Soto family wanted to send my father to school, paying all his expenses; but my father didn't want it. Instead he wanted to work and earn his own living. So at age six he started to work for his needs. He worked very hard to earn 50 cents a week, two dollars a month, carrying large buckets of water to families all over town.

Although the Soto family wanted my father to stop working, he refused to burden them with what he thought was his responsibility. At age nine my father began to work in a bakery store and became a bread pastrymaker. There he worked, and there he met my mother.

Unlike my father, my mother had her mother and father alive. She also had many brothers and sisters. She attended school up to third grade, but her parent's income wasn't enough to feed such a large family. My mother was then forced to go to work also

very young. As a housekeeper my mother tells me her lifestyle wasn't easy at all especially with the people she used to work for. They treated her very badly and also overworked her. She said she moved from job to job until she started to work for this couple. The lady was a teacher and her husband had a good working position. These people were somewhat wealthy and they were pleased with my mother. They treated my mother kindly, and my mother enjoyed working for them. These people lived near where my father worked as a baker.

In Puerto Rico we don't buy bread by the loaf. We buy it by the yard. One day my mother was sent to the bakery to buy a yard of bread, and when she got to the bakery my father was tending the store. My mother asked him for the yard of bread. He quickly gave it to her and asked her if he could see her again. She told him she didn't know.

Then one weekend when my mother had her day off, she decided to go out with her girlfriends. They all went and sat down on the stairs of a neighbor's house. When suddenly my father passed by, my mother saw him and told her girlfriends that someday she would marry the young man. She said this jokingly, and then they all started giggling.

After that, my father proposed to my mother and they got to know each other better. The people that my mother worked for found out about my mother and father being in love. Then they gave my father permission to visit my mother.

However when my grandmother found out that my mother was seeing my father, she was very upset and demanded that my mother stop seeing my father. But my mother never did. So my grandmother wanted my mother to stop working there and go to work somewhere else. My mother refused to go. My mother was determined to continue seeing my father, and she wanted to marry my father with or without her parent's consent.

The teacher that my mother worked for thought my grandmother was irrational and unfair to my mother and father. My mother was 20 years old at the time. Since my grandma didn't want my mother and father to get married. They ran away together and got married after my youngest brother was born.

The Homeless One

I was a homeless person. I use to sleep in my car for about two months. I spent my time walking in Bliss Park. I went on top of a hill one day. I kneel down and cried. I asked God to help me because I shouldn't have to live this way. The next day it dawned on me something told me to sell my car. I sold my car for $550. I used the money and got a furnished room. Then things began to change in my life. I got a job as a dietician. A friend of mine gave me an opportunity to become a superintendent and the job came with a free apartment. So I took the job. After this my life started to change for the better.

Jose Lao

Anthony Pruitt

Look at Me Now

Before I came here to Discipleship School, I asked my wife about a school in Manhattan on East 14th Street for day and night classes. When I started there, I thought I would like it so I took a chance and went.

I saw so many different things when I got there. I knew that if I would go things would change for me. When I asked one teacher about something that I was unsure of all se did was look at me strangely. I said to myself, "She doesn't care if I pass my GED or not."

So when I went to work on Sunday, my wife told me that in church she met a young lady, and her name was Joni. My wife told me Joni would help me with my GED so I told her O.K. So when I came here for the first time I felt a little funny because of the way people looked at me. Since I've been here I like it very much. This place makes me feel better than the other school I went to. Now I can read and write so much better than before and the people here make me feel great.

I enjoy coming here. It is a great place. It is also a great feeling to know that you can make yourself a much better person. I like the teachers here. They are better than the other teachers at the other school. They care, and they teach me things that I like. I can thank God for my wife, Joni and Hector. They make a person feel comfortable. When we read together with people that's good. So in here you can meet different friends. You can be with people who care and enjoy making new friends. On Monday, Sara is here. She teaches a lot and gives a lot of homework, but I like it because I have more to do at home.

I am so happy that my wife told me about this place. She is going to Hunter College, and I am very proud of her. When you want something a person can't make you do something. You have to want to do it for yourself to make a better life for yourself and family. I want to get my GED to get a better way of life. I am looking for a better future for me and my family to enjoy.

I thank God for what He did for me. He helped me get myself back into school. If it wasn't for Him, I don't know what I would have don with my life. I know that for this I thank God for the wonderful teachers, Joni, Sara, Sandy, Ruth and my lovely wife, Iris.

A Letter To My Dad

Dear Daddy,

Hi! I'm starting off by saying that "I miss you terribly!" I wish you were here.

There is so much I would like to tell you. So much has happened since you left me. Things would be so much better if you were here. For one thing, I would not have to work so hard because I know you would help me out.

Daddy, I know we were not very close, but why did you leave me right when we were becoming closer? I know that I disappointed you when I dropped out of school. It was stupid, but look at me now. I am trying to do something for myself.

I am grateful for one thing -- knowing you. You were a wonderful man to know. I remember when I got in trouble with mom, you would always stick up for me. You were a very generous and understanding man. This is why your memory will live in my heart forever.

If I had five minutes more with you, I would tell you I love you, I love you, I love you for those five minutes. God bless you. May you rest in peace, Daddy. I love you.
Your daughter.

Rosita

Myself

I used to feel so nervous to read in front of people because people looked at me because I don't know how to read. I don't get nervous anymore. I like to read in the class because I learn more day by day. So this is my story.

My teacher is Sara. I love her so much. I give thanks to God that I am going to school. I help my daughter to do her homework and read with her, and I don't get nervous anymore. I can read a letter in the mail. I understand to read and write is very important.

Rose Marie Mojica

The Child in the Wrong Class

When I was in the 5th grade all the children were very sick. Some had no legs and no arms. I was so mixed up with these feelings. I didn't know what I was doing in this class I tried so hard to work on my reading and math but I couldn't do it because I would look at these people and say what is wrong with me? And then I would fight with anybody who would get in my way. I was put in the "retarded class" because I was always fighting. So then they fixed me with these kids.

I was always mad and angry about my father and one brother; they were doing things to me and I didn't like it. So by the time I went to school I was so hurt and angry about this. I went to my mother, and she told me not to say anything.

I was running all the time. I couldn't think of anything but hurt and pain. I would do anything so I could stay with children who were angry too. All my friends got in more trouble and me too.

I liked having friends, but soon they would go away because they would find out I couldn't read. Then they would laugh at me so I would stay in my house all the time.

God, I didn't like it. I prayed hard to read, but I guess I was not ready to learn. One thing was hard for me, to trust anybody and that went on for a long time. I didn't trust God either.

There are so many things that happened when I was 13 years old. I was in junior high school. That was so frightening because it was a big school, a lot of children and changing classes. For two or three days it was ok. but then the teachers wanted me to iron their wives clothes and clean their classes. Then I would fight all the time.

There was one boy named Thomas. He was so mean to me. He was in my class all the time. He was in the 5th grade until junior high school. He would hit me all the time until the day I wished I could have hit him over and over again.

Then I stopped going to school, and I got married at the age of seventeen. I didn't know anything about being a wife. It was hard to be married but I stayed. And at 20 years old I had a child, a boy. He was a beautiful baby. His name is Johnny. His father was so happy; he looked like his Dad. I was so thankful to have a baby. And then five years later, I had a baby girl. Her name is Kim. I got very sick with her. I didn't know what was going on with me. I was always crying.

Then I got a little better. I took care of my kids, and I tried hard to go to some schools to learn more. But it didn't work out so I got a job and started to work hard and then I had another baby. His name is Thomas. He looks like me a little. He is a very good boy. I love all my children. Then my husband got very sick with his heart and he was sick for a long time. Then he got better, and we did alot of things with the kids. But four years later, he got cancer and died in four months. It happened so fast. I was all alone and didn't know how to ask for help. So I started to drink and take drugs, and I was so mad at God.

I was so wrong about things. It was not God's fault for what happened in my life. It was people and things that did it, not God.

Then I looked at myself and went to a doctor to talk. She was the nicest person in the world. The first person I trusted. She worked with me for a long time but then I was still drinking so she asked me to go to AA, and I did well. Thank God and her; they helped me not to drink.

When I went to meetings, they would ask me to read a paper, and I would say I didn't have my glasses. But that got better because I told someone about my problem. He says try hard to go back to school and you will feel better. So somebody told me about this school. My life has changed so much. This place is full of love and understanding. People are so nice. It's helped me get out of myself and talk to people, and it means so much to learn. It is a lot of work for me, but I do want to learn.

I sometimes think of getting my G.E.D., but I get so mad because it was so wrong what the schools did to me. They put me in that kind of class. If someone would have helped me, I would have been reading alot and had my G.E.D. now. But Thank God I found this school and now I have a nice teacher. She helps me alot. She works hard to help people like me.

Pat

Single Parent

God has been so good to me in so many ways. Right now I am a single parent, and I have a daughter living with me.He provides for us and meets all our needs! I thank God everyday for everything that He blesses us with. For example, He has blessed me with my health and my bills are always paid. We live in a comfortable apartment.

I have a seventeen year old daughter who loves me and respects me. During the summer, she worked at the Methodist Hospital as a secretary. On pay day she would give me all her money, but I took only half of it and paid the bills. The other half I put in the bank for her.

I also have the freedom to go out. I go to Christian seminars, to church, to restaurants, and I visit sick people in their homes.

As a single parent my goal is to learn more writing in class so one day I can write straight through without stopping. The teacher and my classmates are so nice. They make me feel comfortable.

Loida Garcia

Wanting to Be Different

I always see my father drinking alot, starting arguments with my mother and beating my brother. I saw my father sleeping on the bed. My brother called him to eat dinner, but he was sleeping so my brother took the dinner back to the kitchen and left it there.

One day my sister ran to the hallway and said to my father, " Do you love me?" Then she cried. My other sister doesn't care at all for my father. Once he gets up I see him walking like a zombie, weak and going back out into the streets. He doesn't care if a car hits him.

I don't want to be like my father or brother because my father talks to me in my room about drugs. I'm not like my brother because I don't use drugs or drink. I am not perfect because I take drinks in my friend's house but I am not an alcoholic.

I feel sad because I see my father drinks alot, I tell him not to drink because he could die of cirrhosis of the liver. Every Friday he goes out to drink and acts stupid. I still love him but not the things he does.

Abel Gonzalez

My Life with My Fiancee

I have a beautiful and supportive girlfriend who is always there for me. Her name is Bertha. She helps me when I need advice. She listens when I need to be heard. I like to spend time with Bertha.

She is fun to be with and has a lot of crazy ideas. We like to play basketball or go to the movies. We enjoy going out to dinner at fine restaurants and sometimes go on trips.

At this time we are working hard to get our G.E.D. We both attend the Discipleship Program. We both want our diplomas to advance ourselves in life. Then my plans for the future include Bertha. First I will enlist in the U.S. Marines for four years and specialize in computers or navigation.

Then my fiance, Bertha, would like to become a registered nurse or a pediatrician. I'll back her up all the way. After we fulfill our goals we will plan to have children.

We'll show them the values of school and why they need it to get through life. We would like them to choose their path from when they are very young. All we can do is guide them through the right path and hope they stay on that path.

We are getting married on July 21, 1990 at 3:00 p.m.

Ray Jimenez

Emilio Jimenez

My Work

I would like to write about my job. I work as a maintenance man for the Department of the Handicapped and, the work I do is cleaning the floors and the bathrooms and taking out the garbage. I also clean the cafeteria. After lunch I also mop the classrooms after students leave the building area for the day. There are twelve classrooms in the building. Sometimes the students help me in taking out the garbage and sweeping the cafeteria.

Some of the clients are very nice to me. They say good morning every day to me, and I say good morning to them. Sometimes the job gets aggravating. I say that becuse when I am in the maintenance room the secretary calls me on the speaker that the men's room is flooded and there is something in the toilet that makes water come out. I must come to clean the large flood.

A New Me

Man in his search for superior status has always had to fight strongly against all adversities and against all kinds of obstacles to reach his goal. At the beginning he had to fight against other animals. At other times against man and today against himself.

One of the most difficult battles that men have to confront is the fight against ignorance. All of us have had opportunities to raise our academic level. Sometimes we did not know how to take advantage of that opportunity; at other times we couldn't because of our immediate responsibilities. For example, we had to work to support our family.

We know that it is important to prepare ourselves for a better future. That's why we are trying to improve our speaking abilities, our reading skills, and our writing skills. This opportunity is possible by attending the Discipleship Educational Center. Here you can see students talking, writing and reading different topics that the teacher elects. It is moving to see everybody trying to do their best when they read. Later, students explain in their own words what they have read.

In my particular case, it has been a great blessing to find this location because I have for a long time been trying to improve my English. I have read books and listened to records. I have attended different schools in my country and in this city, but never have I received so much encouragement and so much warmth. The teachers do alot to help you. Even if you think you can't do it, you feel obligated to do it because it is impossible to say "no" when you have somebody asking you with a smile on her face. Then you try, and you realize you can.

I never before talked to a audience aloud in English. Joni suggested that I try, but I tried to evade her. I couldn't. I had to talk. I talked, and it seemed that I did it okay because everybody applauded at the end. Everybody had a sincere smile on their face. I felt very good after speaking. I thanked everybody because they helped me to eliminate my fear of speaking in public.

30

German Suarez

Alba Rosado

The First Miracle

Within four months of accepting Jesus Christ as my "Only Savior", He did my first miracle. Even though I doubted that He could do it. My daughter needed an operation on her tonsils and adenoids. Her tonsils were swollen. She couldn't breathe because her adenoids were also swollen. My daughter had a high fever, headache, backache, stiff neck and a pain in her throat very strong.

I also needed an operation called a hysterectomy; both surgeries were an emergency. I was separated from my husband. In my country, it is not easy to get easy payments for the hospital bills. I felt a great affliction. I cried so much because I didn't have money available for the surgeries.

My children and I were living in my sister's house. I didn't want to call my husband because he knew what the doctors said, but he didn't give me any money for the surgeries.

I prayed to my Lord Jesus for help; I went to Him to help me to get the money for the surgeries. I expected a miracle from Him so I could believe more in Him. Alleluya.

I asked myself," Where could I get the money I needed, seven hundred dollars?" All of a sudden I had a long distance call from a friend in New York, I told him what I was going through. He told me not to worry because he was going to help me. He asked how much I needed; I was ashamed to tell him how much it was and kept silence. I thought it was so much. He asked me again so I told him it was seven hundred dollars. He said don't worry tomorrow you will have the money in your hands.

To my surprise the next day at five o'clock I had a call to get some money from an international company. I was so happy. I laughed and cried at the same time.

I thank God. Alleluya. Praise the Lord because He answered my prayers so soon. Jesus is merciful, and He also knows when you really need Him. That's why everyday I feel more happy to serve Jesus Christ. He saves and hears all our prayers, and He never fails. He is love but also is fire. God Bless you. I love you with the love of Jesus Christ.

Orlando Alvarado

Back to Life

One night several years ago, my nephew and I went to play pool at a local bar. When we got to the bar, it was eight o'clock. We then had several drinks and played a couple games of pool.

At two o'clock we left the bar to drive around. My nephew was the driver, and I was the passenger. We were approaching a red light, but we continued because the light suddenly turned green. Another car was approaching us, however we didn't see it. The other car hit us on the passenger side where I was sitting.

The accident wasn't our fault. It was a hit and run. I didn't notice the accident because I had too much to drink. I heard voices asking me if I was the driver because they couldn't find my nephew at first.

The impact was so hard that my body pushed my nephew out of the car. They found him 100 feet away from the accident. It was a miracle that my nephew only suffered a broken hip.

The next thing I knew I woke up in the hospital in intensive care with seven ribs fractured. My lung was also punctured by my ribs. That caused me to have internal bleeding. I had to have an operation because of this. They stuck a tube down into my lung so they could draw the blood out of my lung.

Thank the Lord for watching over me. He didn't let me perish because he knew I was going to be saved.

Reports

Antonio Cantres

John Fitzgerald Kennedy

This man was president of the United States. His name was John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the 35th president of the United States. This man was assassinated by a 30 caliber rifle in 1963. When he was killed he was only 46 years old. He held office for only two years and five months.

He was born on May 29, 1927 in Brookline, Mass., a suburb of Boston. He came from a family of eight. He was the second son of Joseph Patrick Kennedy. The Kennedys had Irish blood. Joseph Patrick Kennedy was ambassador to Great Britain from 1888-1969.

In 1940, John F. Kennedy graduated from Harvard University. After the university, he went to the navy from 1941-1945. That was during World War II. Now in 1946, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Then in 1952, he was elected to the U.S. Senate; he took the place of Henry Cabot Lodge II in the Senate.

Then in 1953, he was married to Jaqueline Lee Bouvier. They met at a dinner party in Washington D.C. Kennedy was the author of the bestseller, While England Slept. It became popular in 1940. He wrote it as his senior thesis.

After his popular political career, he went for the big win -- the presidency. John F. Kennedy ran against Richar M. Nixon. Kennedy ran against Nixon because he was the logical choice for the Republican presidential nomination. In 1960, Nixon lost to the best president of the U.S., J.F. Kennedy.

Kennedy worked for civil rights in 1961. Kennedy wanted to have blacks and whites desegregated in all aspects of their lives. To meet the growing demands of the Blacks, Kennedy asked Congress to pass legislation.

One of Kennedy's successes was the Cuban Missile Crisis. Cuba and Russia had a little secret. They were bringing missiles to Cuba. Kennedy acted quickly. He ordered the U.S. Navy ships to go to Cuba. The U.S. surrounded Cuba in 1962. Kennedy thought that the missiles were headed toward the U.S. Kennedy talked to the Cuban and Russian governments, and they agreed on not sending missiles into Cuba. Then they went home.

So there are many things to know about this president. I think he was a good president. He told Americans, "Ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country."

Batman -- The Dark Knight Returns
Frank Miller, Klaus Janson, Lynn Varley
A Book Report

The story picks up ten years after the death of Jason Todd. His contemporaries know him as Robin, the Boy Wonder. It was a dramatic warehouse explosion that took his mother's life too. Bruce Wayne vowed, upon his parent's death, to rid the city of Gotham of the criminal elements that caused the death of Robin. He had also vowed never to become Batman....until now.

Bruce Wayne thinks of the past when he first discovered the Bat cave. After a half hour sitting in front of the T.V., Bruce looks back at the night his parents died. They were coming home from seeing Zorro in a nearby movie theater. His parents thought that the shortcut through the alley was a quick way home. Then a stranger came out of the shadows, thinking only to rob and kill. Bruce was pushed aside while his parents put up a great fight but were shot and killed. He goes over the picture again and again and again in his mind until he breaks into a cold sweat.

That night, after ten years of violent crimes happening all over Gotham City victims of muggers, killers, and other destructive criminals start showing up in hospitals. So the fact is clear, Batman must be born again to put fear in the eyes and hearts of those who take the laws of Gotham City as a joke.

Police Commissioner Gordon is scheduled to retire after thirty years at the same time Batman reappears. But Batman hopes Gordon will help him pull the plug on crime once again.

Two days later Gordon hears about a criminal from long ago named Harvey Dent. Twelve years before, half of Dent's face was scarred by acid. Harvey has become obsessed with the his deformed face. He marks a silver coin with one side defaced, the other perfectly unmarked. A flip of the coin will decide whether his victims will live or die. Usually its death to the loser of the game.

That night on T.V., Dr. Bartholomew Wolper said that Dent is o.k. to return to the world. Dr. Wolper treated Dent for the last three years for his psychosis. There is reason to believe that Dent is responsible for some of the recent crimes. The next day Dent disappears and Commissioner Gordon issues an all points bulletin for Dent's arrest. The Bat signal came on after ten years of silence. Gordon met with Batman so they could figure out a plan to trap Dent.

A day passes. It's night. And Harvey Dent is about to put his plan into action. Dent interrupts T.V. land to tell Gotham City that he plans to blow up Gotham's beautiful twin towers. He wants five million dollars in twenty minutes or he'll do it. Little did he know that Batman was near by ready to go into action. Batman hides on the roof of one of the towers where one of the helicopters sets down. Batman springs into action, disarming six of Dent's men with his skillful karate moves. He then finds out that the copter on the roof has a bomb in it. He freezes the controls, stops the count down on the bomb and now he wants Dent.

Dent fires at Batman but misses and loses his footing;falling from the tower, Batman jumps after him. The Bat catches him in the air then throws a cable that hooks on the roof. Batman and Dent crash into a window, both of them land on the floor but with Batman standing over Dent. Batman hits Dent once, twice, three times until Dent stops fighting Batman then Batman gives a long hard look at Dent. Batman thinks as Dent talks, "Take a look, have your laugh, at least both sides match". Batman covers his face in the shadows and tells Dent, "I see a reflection, Harvey, just a reflection." The story ends but leaves us with a new respect for life. The life of the BATMAN...

Larry Wise

Fiction

The Anniversary

The child awoke early and quietly walked past his parent's room so not to disturb them. It was a special day for two very, very special people. As he reached the bottom of the stairs, he thought of them.

His mom had pretty blue eyes. Her yellow hair reminded him of the corn that grew out back in the fields. His Dad was quite big and had very big arms that hugged him whenever he was within reach. Dad had dark hair, well not really that dark, but surely as dark as the pancakes they had after church on Sunday.

Now he had reached the kitchen and surveyed the whole place before entering. He got the stool that his dad sat on when he put on his boots to work in the fields. The little boy used the stool to climb up to the cupboard where mom kept her dishes and bowls. He brought down two bowls and two cups from the cupboard. Now the little boy filled the two bowls full of cereal and milk, then he filled the two cups full of orange juice. The child put the bowls and cups on a tray almost as big as himself.

He climbed the stairs to his parent's room leaving a trail of spilled juice and cereal behind him. He pushed their door open and stood brimming with pride as he yelled in his little voice, "Happy Anniversary"!

His mom and dad hugged each other, then the child. They laughed at the sight of the almost empty bowls and cups. They smiled, and then they cried.

Michael W. Reilly III

Tony and Anna

Hi! My name is Tony. I would like to tell you a part of my life story, the story of how I met Anna in school. One day I was walking to school with my friends, and I saw a very nice looking girl, and her name was Anna. She was 12 years old like me, but I acted like a man.

My friends said, "Tony, are you going to ask her out? I said, "I will ask her out after school when I see her." Suddenly I saw Anna; she looked at me and smiled and walked to her classroom. I ran up to her and said, "Hi, my name is Tony and what is your name?" She said, "My name is Anna, and it is nice to meet you, Tony."

I said to Anna, "If you don't mind, could I take you to your classroom?" She said, "Yes." I said, "Great, let's go." So we went to her classroom. Then I said, "Will I see you later?" Anna said, "Yes, I will see you later after school in the hallway."

So I left. The bell rang. I was late to my class. I ran as fast as I could. When I got there my teacher, Miss Santiago, said, "Tony, you are five minutes late." I told her I was sorry, and I promised it would never happen again.

Miss Santiago said, "O.K., I will let you go this time but the next time I will write a letter to your parents." Then she told me to sit down.

When I sat down, I started thinking about that girl who looked at me and smiled. Then my teacher said to me, "Are you O.K. Tony?" I acted very funny to my teacher because I was thinking about that girl, Anna. I said, "Yes, Miss Santiago."

All my friends burst out laughing at me. My teacher looked at my friends and said, "That's it. All of you are getting a letter home!"

Anthony Rivera

The Waterbug

Last night I had a hard time getting to sleep. I decided to go get a glass of milk to calm me down, when I noticed a big, black, glossy waterbug camping out on my kitchen mat. Suddenly I realized that if I hadn't turned on the light, I would have squashed his feelers and crusty body through my toes and that made me ready for the kill! Afterall, an alien life-form had invaded my territory!

I looked for a weapon.....books, pans, anything! I found the boot, Steve's hiking boot. It was solid! I crept up to the tresspasser with the rubber weapon in my hand. I raised it up over my shoulder and aimed right at my target. BAM! He's squashed, I assumed. But turning over Steve's boot, in a panic, I searched between the crevices of the rubber, but there was no bug. He must of dashed under the sink and is hanging out under the plywood of my kitchen cabinets right now. Tomorrow morning I will exterminate him and his whole family with Raid, I reasoned.

Feeling a bit defeated, I walked in the hall, back into my bedroom and closed the door. I felt safe from them when the door was closed. I fell asleep but woke up again. For some reason I felt that I was not alone in the room. My husband and daughters were away for the weekend and I felt an unwelcome presence. I flicked on my reading light and there he was limping toward my bed, dragging a foot like Igor. The limping revengeful waterbug that I had missed came back for more of Steve's boot. I didn't waste any time but grabbed the hiking boot. For a moment I turned into a mad-woman. I mashed him, beheaded him and dismembered him with the shoe. His head was on the wall. His legs were scattered. His left wing landed on Barbie, my daughter's doll.

The next day, Steve and the kids came home. We had a scrumptious chicken dinner and dessert. We read stories to the kids, watched an old movie on T.V. and we lived happily ever after with the hiking boot in the middle of our bed!

40

Sara Jorgensen

Opinions

Learning in America

As a mother with three children in public schools, I am alarmed. I have read the Times coverage on the number of high school children who are leaving school with fourth grade reading and writing skills. How could this happen?

I have talked to P.S. 154 teachers and children about this very serious problem that we are all facing. We just cannot send our children to school and expect the teachers to do all of the work. We must take an interest in our childrens' homework and schoolwork. Parents must sit down and help their children learn. If there is no interest in the home, how can the child be expected to learn?

Public schools should do more screen testing in the early years from kindergarden and up to spot the problems from the start such as reading, writing, spelling, etc.

Many classrooms in the public schools are overcrowded. Some students sit on the floor. How can a teacher be expected to give single additional help to any one student. Maybe more teacher aides would ease the burden for some schools. More money should be spent on after school programs for children who have working parents, or parents who cannot help children with homework.

Some students I spoke to found that being bored in the classroom was one reason for not wanting to learn. Maybe teachers should try to make their classroom more interesting. More pay for teachers would be a good incentive for them to come back to the public school system.

Maybe if some of the things I have talked about were part of the school system, we would see a change in our children's learning. One thing is for sure, we cannot keep our eyes closed to this problem any longer.

Shiobhion Hamill

Love And Marriage At A Young Age

I don't think love and marriage at a young age is good for any couple. A young couple doesn't know what love is and they haven't lived their lives yet.

I should know from experience. My name is Lisa, and I got married at age 16. I've been married four years and during those four years, the only time I could say I was very happy was when I had my son and daughter. The rest of the time I've been miserable.

When my husband and I first got married we thought we were going to be very happy. We didn't know what was waiting for us. We didn't have our own apartment. We had to live with relatives; that didn't work out. We couldn't afford the rent for an apartment so we went back and forth from place to place. That wasn't fun to do! We couldn't get a decent job because we didn't have a high school diploma.

Sometimes we barely had money for food and clothing. It was very hard living like that. We both argued with each other because we got tired of each other, and we couldn't deal with the problems.

Now we have our own apartment. That doesn't mean we don't have any problems from time to time. One thing I learned from being married is you can't count on anyone to help you. You have to take care of everything yourself. You can't give up.

I have friends that ask me how it is being married. I tell them the truth. I say to them, "Don't do what I did." They won't be able to handle the problems. Some of my friends listen; some don't. They are going through the same things my husband and I did. Some go through worse things.

If I had to do it all over again I would do it the right way. The only thing I don't regret was having my two kids. I love them with all my heart even if they get in my way and stop me from doing things that I want to do.

That's why I don't agree with young love and marriage. I should know, I talk from experience.

Lisa Rosario

Albert Swindell

Holy Roller

This year Discipleship asked students if they would like to go on a retreat. We talked about it, and someone said to me, "Watch out -- they'll turn you into a Holy Roller." I laughed and said, "Not me." But the people in the program always made me feel good so I decided to go.

Well, I was in for a big surprise. We were there by Friday evening. I stayed in the parking lot and looked up at the stars. I felt the presence of God. I was always afraid of people, but the way they ran the retreat was great. I asked God for the willingness to do the right thing. And it all came together. There was faith, love and understanding. We worked together; we prayed together, and we sang together. It really opened up my mind.

If this is what Holy Rollers do, so be it. I would follow these people anywhere. I love you all.

Where Prejudice Comes From

Racial attack is the result of prejudice and hate. Racial prejudice has been around for a long time. Often racial prejudice is caused by skin color. For example, White people can be prejudiced against black people. The reason why? Their color. Just because they are black. Whites and blacks cannot get along.

Since the time of slavery they've had strange rules in the South. All of the public water fountains, telephone booths, and restrooms were separated. There were signs that said "whites only" and other signs that said "colored". When white and black citizens used the public transportation, the rule was that the whites sat in the front, and the blacks stood at the rear of the bus. The reason why? Just because of the color of the human flesh.

Recently in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn, a posse of white teenagers shot and killed a black teen. The black teenager was just walking in the neighborhood, and they noticed him because of his skin color. Some white people think that the majority of blacks are criminals. The teenager was killed because he was a black in a white neighborhood.

When I heard about the killing, I was frustrated. It's not fair at all! I get along with everyone, including blacks. There is nothing wrong with talking or having a black friend. Maybe it isn't color after all! It all depends on what's on the inside of the person. We could eliminate racial prejudice by just making the effort to understand one another.

Ralph Perez

! Drugs Speak Out!

Friends, let me introduce myself. My Name is Drugs. I am the one who has been destroying the lives of many ignorant youth. I am introduced at dances and parties. At first, I'll make you live outside of this world of problems, but in due time you will need me.

I am Drugs. I have come to destroy the whole world. I don't care if you're white or black, rich or poor. I've been following you. After you have tasted me, you are mine for the rest of your life. I own you.

I wake you up in the morning and make you think of me. Even if you don't want me, I am your "MASTER". You are my slave. I make you walk like a puppet. You're in my will and your will is mine. I'll destroy your life physically, morally and spiritually.

I will destroy your happiness and home. I have you hooked and you are in love with me. There is no one who can break our love against each other. You'll try to forget me, but it's useless.

My one enemy is Jesus Christ -- the Son of God. I am jealous of Him. I see how He has taken my followers and now they live happily with Him. He is the only one who can overcome me. What I have destroyed; He will fix. Against Him I cannot fight.

Nelly Garcia

Racial Tension

Racial tension is something that is happening today among New York City teenagers. Two weeks ago a young teenager by the name of Yusef Hawkins was killed by a gang of white teenagers as he went to look for a used car. He was killed in Bensonhurst, and it hurt his family who was in so much shock because that was their only son.

There was so much protesting that people started to turn against one another and fighting broke out. Sometimes I wish that this was not happening to people but it is. It hurts me deep down inside my heart to see that we cannot try to communicate with each other to put a stop to what's going on around us.

Lisa Haynes

The Homeless

I think to be young and homeless is a bad spot to be in. During the winter many of these people die of starvation and the cold. The rest of the year they have to find ways to keep clean, eat food and find a place to sleep. They also have drug problems that they have to deal with. Often, parents throw them out of the house. Some of them are runaways.

I know a homeless woman. Her name is Betty. I met her in the park, and she told me that she was homeless. She sleeps on the park bench. I bought her breakfast a few times.

Discipleship is going to have a program next year for homeless teenagers between eighteen and twenty one years old. They will be able to stay for nine months in this program. They have to be serious about it, and there will be rules to go by. The program is a good idea to get homeless teenagers off the street. Teenagers would have to work and save money. After nine months they could get their own apartment.

Hector Diaz

Hannah Bacon

What's Happening God?

I watched Oprah Winfrey speaking about kids killing each other and being caught between cross fire. A 13 year old girl was shot by a boy about the same age who is now serving life in prison. The parents and aunt of the child who was killed forgave the boy.

Drugs are a major problem. Drug dealers don't care about nobody. They have no respect for anyone. They kill for drugs, jewelry, and the color of your skin. The drug dealers sell guns to our children. These kids don't have any respect for themselves, teachers, or parents. My husband asked me why I don't send the kids outside by themselves. I'm scared they might get hurt. What's happening to our world, God?

Parents are killing their own kids. They are abusing them or having sex with them. You can't trust anyone these days -- babysitters, police, foster homes, stores and even some parents. We shouldn't live like this.

I wish everybody could trust the Lord Jesus Christ and all black and white would trust each other.

Crack -- The Big Killer

You walk by the street corners and all you see is Crack. Crack is everywhere, and it is a big killer. Even where the neighborhoods seem so quiet, there's Crack. The best places around the world have Crack: New York, Paris, the U.S.S.R. and even the small places like Puerto Rico and Hawaii.

The war against Crack will soon end. The President is trying to end this war, and we are starting to do things about it. The war against drugs is starting to be in our favor, us, the citizens. If the citizens keep working together, we will win the war on Crack. Keep fighting!

Enriquetta Guzman Serrano

Double Trouble

This is a story of my kids and I. When I was pregnant I didn't know I was carrying twins until after my first son was born. Minutes later the doctor said, "Oh, oh, you have another baby inside." And I found myself in labor all over again!

I opened my eyes when it was finally over and saw two beautiful boys that were identical. After the excitement I thought about my daughter, Jessica, and how she would feel. I knew throughout the whole pregnancy she wanted a sister to play with.

I never knew what it was like having twins until I found myself caring for them. As they got older, I had to watch them carefully because they were very active.

At first, Jessica didn't want them home. But after I sat and explained to her that she must learn to accept them, she began understanding. It took her awhile to accept them, but then after awhile she started helping me with them.

As time went by, she got use to her brothers. It was time to start school and make friends of her own. I took my daughter to school everyday because my husband worked. I had to get up early to dress my daughter and sons and make sure they were dressed accordingly to the weather.

I also took them everywhere I went because I didn't have anyone to help me. All my family lives in Puerto Rico. My husband worked everyday from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. by the time he finally came home at night, the kids were already sleeping. During the weekends my husband was very helpful to me with the kids, thank God, somehow we managed.

Nelba Roman

Poetry

Michael W. Reilly III

My Dream

I dream of a winter's storm,
of cold crisp air of an October morn.
I dream of places far away.
The pyramids of Egypt so far from here.
Through my imagination I can see it clear.

I dream of tomorrows without pain, hunger and war.
These things are evil and that I deplore.
I dream of green landscapes from my ancestors land.
And focus it in my mind's eye, and I'm walking that land.

I dream the dreams of poets and muse,
Yet sometimes my dreams are somewhat confused.
I stand on a hill and look over God's land.
And smile as I feel the softness of His hand.

The dreams I have I sometimes don't understand, but
I smile with reassurance that I'm part of my God's plan.

Who Am I ?

Who am I ? A mother who tries
to achieve for my children.

Who am I ? A person who's lost
in the world.

Who am I ? A mother who prays to God
for her family and friends.

Who am I ? A person who wants to
learn about new things.

Who am I ? A person who wants
to achieve in life.

Who am I ? A person who teaches others
with learning difficulties.

Who am I ? A person who prays to God
for His help and guidance.

Who am I ? The person who knows that
God is wonderful because He is the sun,
the sky and the air that we breathe.

Angela Arroyo

J.L. DeMarco

Rainbow of People

In school there are people
of different color religion races
God's people
people understand
it is hard to know
if all can feel the color grow
you see it all in the New York life
from all country all walks of life
the world is so beautiful
a rainbow of life

Everyone Needs an Education

Today I completed my second step in life,
No, this step was not finding a wife.

What it is has already begun,
Not knowing school was such fun.

It felt so good to have an education,
In reading, writing, and correct punctuation.

I feel as if my mind is a computer,
Maybe in a year I'll be someone's tutor.

'Cause teaching is something I can share,
With adults or kids everywhere.

From around our nation and our world,
From the smallest boy to the smallest girl.

They should all go to school and learn,
All about life and the money they'll earn.

But they should also be taught the Word of our Lord,
So later in life they won't be bored.

We also must teach them drugs are bad,
They can make them unhappy and very sad.

But until I complete my last step in life,
All my decisions will be thought over twice.

Hoping I left a good message again,
In the name of the Father, the Son,
And the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Oswaldo Vargas

Seeing It Through

To give of yourself freely and
to be there when you are needed.

To respect one another's feelings and
to help each other no matter how hard the task.

To make the one you love feel good
when "he" or "she" is feeling down and blue.

To understand each other's way
and in understanding to become one in love.

To make the one you love feel good
about themselves.

To cry for each other when
things get hard.

To make up and in making up realizing not to judge
one another for what they have done wrong.

To expect you can rest assured that
seeing it through, there will be no end.

Anna Hernandez

Words in a Touch
dedicated to my son, Luis

Your eyes shine like a beautiful star.
The closer you may be the more wonderful they are.

Your face is so cute and loveable too,
I could stay all day just looking at you.

If I could explain words in a touch,
then let me say I love you so much.

Denise Van Tuyl

Clara Gomez

Who Am I ?

Who am I ? A person who cries for help.

Who am I ? A person who was touched by Jesus and is no longer the same person.

Who am I ? A mother of three girls who prays everyday to God with tears in her eyes.

Who am I ? A person who cares about people dying of AIDS and the people who are lost on drugs.

Who am I ? A sister who misses her brother dearly and wishes he were here.

Who am I ? A student who attends the School of Discipleship and prays everyday to God to bless us all.

Oswaldo Vargas

Learning About Feelings

I learned so much as years went by-
Learned to love, hate, laugh and cry.

These experiences have taught me so,
Never to hold them in, but to let them go.

By holding your feelings in, you can fall apart
Not only physically but in mind and heart.

Feelings sometimes can play tricky games,
But never feel down or ashamed.

Learning from your mistakes you will know,
Not to commit the same mistakes tomorrow.

I'm telling you this 'cause it's in my past-
For my story of feelings would last and last.

I've struggled and suffered all on my own,
If it happens to you, don't be alone.

Go talk to someone you can trust,
Even to someone you don't, if you must.

Talk about good things like your health,
But never feel hatred for yourself.

Also remember you should never try
Holding in your feelings or your cries.

In crying sometimes you can let it go,
The hate you have inside for a foe.

So let it out or it will only hurt more,
Than it ever hurt you before.

Now listen to me for I have something to say,
Don't start tomorrow, start today.

Español

Grupo Unidos

Somos un grupo deseado de aprender a leer y a escribir Ingles. Estudiamos en union y companerimor. Nuestra maestra interesada en ayudarnor, enforzandose, en comprendernos, motivandonor a prosperar y a ser alguien en el futuro. Para asi nosotros seguir ayudando a quiener lo nesesite y esten interezado en prosperar en el manana este es un penzar de los estudiantes agradesidos.

Carmen Maria Martinez Colon

A United Group

We are a group willing to learn to read and write English. We study in friendship and union. Our teacher is interested in helping us, forcing us to understand, motivating us to progress and to become somebody in the future. This way we keep on helping whoever needs and is interested in progressing in a tomorrow. This is a thought from the appreciative students.

Carmen Maria Martinez Colon

Sandra Jaime

La Partida

Fue' unos de los dias mas tristes de mi vida cuando tenia que dejar mi pais, todo me parecia como un sueno o como el deseo que uno sieupre pide. Pero a la hora de despedirme de mi familias y amigos, sentia que me ahogobacon mis lagrimos y me provocaban romper los botetos y salir corriendo de ese sitio.

Hay muchas maneras de partir, pero la mas dolorosa es cuando una persona se muere porque uno no la vuelve a ver jamas. Pero cuando uno parte para otro pais nuestros familiares tienen el consuelo do volvernos a ver.

Que horribles son las partidas. ¡Quien en su vida no a seutido lo que significa esta palabra?

Sandra Jaime

The Parting

It was one of the saddest moments of my life -- the day I had to leave my country. Everything seemed like a dream or like a wish that someone craves for. But at the time of my departure from my family and friends, I felt as if I were drowning in my own tears. I was tempted to tear my plane tickets and run out of there.

There are lots of ways to say good-bye and all for different reasons. The most painful is when a person dies because no one will ever see that person again. But when someone leaves to another country, there is hope to see them again.

How horrible are farewells. Who in this life does not know the meaning of this experience?